



Council on Developmental Services



Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

Terrence W. Macy, Ph.D.
Commissioner

Joseph W. Drexler, Esq.
Deputy Commissioner

APPROVED Minutes of February 9, 2012

In Attendance: Jennifer Carroll; Jack Frost; Thomas Kalal; Jamie Lazaroff; Terrence Macy, Ex-Officio; Shelia Mulvey; John Pelegano, Secretary; Lou Richards; Patti Silvia; Patrick Vingo, Vice Chair

Absent: Donna Bouteiller; David Hadden; Jim Heffernan, Chair

Guests: Terry Edelstein, Connecticut Community Providers Association; Nora Duncan, The Arc of Connecticut; Julia Wilcox, Connecticut Association of Nonprofits

Staff: Michelle Bacry, Executive Secretary; Joseph Drexler, Deputy Commissioner; Ed Mambruno, Ombudsperson; Rod O'Connor Legislative Liaison

Vice Chair Patrick Vingo opened the meeting at 6:00 pm and made a motion, which was seconded by Thomas Kalal, to change the agenda to have the Trades Presentation prior to the Ombudsman Report. The Council voted unanimously.

Public Comment:

Andrea Barton Reeves, Vice President of Administration of HARC, spoke regarding the concerns of the families supported by HARC and the different options that are offered to individuals as they age out and the need for legacy of services.

Patrick Vingo thanked Ms. Barton Reeves for her comments and commitment.

Review of December Minutes:

Jennifer Carroll made a motion to accept the minutes as written for the January meeting. Dr. John Pelegano seconded the motion. The Council voted unanimously to accept the January minutes as written.

Trades Presentation:

Nora Duncan, Executive Director of The Arc of Connecticut, described the functions of The Arc of Connecticut as an advocacy organization committed to protecting the rights of people with intellectual disabilities and related developmental disabilities and to promoting opportunities for their full inclusion in the life of their communities.

The Arc of Connecticut along with the Star Foundation has been presenting a series of free workshops entitled "After the Cap & Gown: How to Plan for your Child with Developmental Disabilities." These workshops are designed for parents of children with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities between 15 and 21 years of age.

Ms. Duncan was pleased to inform the Council that Arc US has been given a unique opportunity to have Arc employees, self advocates, volunteers and family members visit the White House and speak with White House staff on Friday, February 10, 2012. She said that it was an exciting time for Arc US.

Terry Edelstein, President/CEO of Connecticut Community Providers Association, thanked the Council for the invitation to present. CCPA represents organizations that provide services and supports for people with disabilities and significant challenges including children and adults with substance use disorders, mental illness, developmental, and physical disabilities.

Ms. Edelstein spoke of the importance of the “safety net” as part of CCPA’s logo to ensure everyone has the correct supports.

Julia Wilcox, Senior Public Policy Specialist from Connecticut Association of Nonprofits, explained how there are thousands of nonprofits in our state – each trying to make a difference on their own. CT Nonprofits is the largest membership organization in the state dedicated exclusively to working with nonprofits. By connecting organizations with information, education, advocacy and collaboration, they help members focus their energy on the people and communities they serve.

Ms. Wilcox spoke of the huge shift in the approach to providing services and the collaboration between the trades’ organizations and the department to form stakeholder groups, to create stronger providers and better services for the department’s consumers.

Mr. Vingo offered the Council members the opportunity to ask the presenters questions. Patti Silva asked Ms. Duncan if The Arc would be interested in supporting a bill that she is hoping will be presented this legislative session entitled Connecticut Deaf Child Bill of Rights. Ms. Duncan expressed interest in supporting the bill and advised Ms. Silva to contact her when she knows it is being raised by the Education Committee.

Ms. Carroll asked for additional information in regards to Executive Order #10 regarding Collective Bargaining for Personal Care Attendants and Child Care Providers. Ms. Duncan encouraged the Council to put their thoughts in writing to become part of the public record in the areas of concern. The more voices heard the better. The latest information can be found at <http://www.governor.ct.gov/malloj//cwp/view.asp?a=3997&q=489750>.

Mr. Vingo thanked the presenters for their participation in the Council meeting.

Ombudsperson’s Report:

Ed Mambruno shared his January report with Council members and updated them on a few issues he has worked on with families.

Mr. Vingo asked Ed Mambruno why it was that one of the consumers he spoke of was not able to receive a rent subsidy. Mr. Mambruno explained that an apartment was acquired that was within the guidelines of the individual’s budget and that a rent subsidy was not needed.

Legislative Update:

Rod O’Connor advised the council that the legislative session for 2012 has convened on February 8th. The two bills for legislative proposals are now three. The proposals are regarding including insurance payments for Birth to Three services as “maintenance of effort” by the state and a bill clarifying the DDS competency statute that mirrors language in the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services competency statute.

Mr. O’Connor told the Council that the Five Year Plan is finalized only waiting on permission to use photos that have been included in the plan.

Mr. O'Connor discussed the development of a DDS Legislative E-Mail Update that will be sent to Council members to keep them up to date on legislative issues.

Commissioner's Update:

Commissioner Macy expressed his gratitude to the Trade's group representatives for presenting at the Council meeting.

Deputy Commissioner Joseph Drexler summarized the Department of Developmental Services budget recessions for fiscal year 2012. The Department received rescissions totaling \$2,757,853. While the rescissions will require careful management, the Department does not anticipate making reductions to existing services. Deputy Commissioner Drexler summarized the fiscal year 2013 budget adjustments submitted by the Governor. He indicated that information will be placed on the DDS website.

Deputy Commissioner Drexler spoke of the development of waiver management system and how once this is in place DDS will be able to bill the federal government for 90% reimbursement on the system's development. These monies will be able to be returned to the DDS budget.

Commissioner Macy discussed the overwhelming need for respite centers for individuals with autism spectrum disorder. These respite centers will be created based on data showing what supports are needed.

Commissioner Macy spoke of the continual need for stakeholder groups to be included all areas of change within DDS to ensure the inclusion of their thoughts and ideas when residential options are created for individuals.

Commissioner Macy spoke of his satisfaction with the diversity of representation at the Mission/Vision workgroup on Wednesday, January 18th, 2012. The workgroup has helped create three key items 1. DDS's Mission which is being developed, 2. DDS's Vision which is currently in draft form, and 3. a Values statement that would express what everyone collectively believes in. Commissioner Macy asked for comments from the Council members who attended. Ms. Carroll was moved by the variety of individuals that participated in the day and how John O'Brien was able to include everyone's prospective throughout the day. Jamie Lazaroff found the day to be uplifting but wished the day could have included more self advocates. He understood a balance of participants had to be created. Shelia Mulvey was impressed with the representation from other agencies and how people were able to speak truthfully on what was important to them. Lou Richards shared the theme of values and respect that was felt all over the room throughout the day.

Commissioner Macy's schedule has been full since the start of 2012. Town Hall meetings have been continuing throughout the month and have provided the opportunity for dialogue among the staff.

Commissioner Macy advised members that the process to fill the vacant positions in the department is still moving forward. An interview process has been devised and there is the hope that key positions will be filled soon.

Old Business:

Michelle Bacry updated the council on the status of 2012 Meeting Topics and Site Visits. Invitations and contact has been made with Robin Wood who has agreed to attend the Council's March meeting to discuss Employment services. Contact has also been made with NEAT Marketplace, Camp Quinebaug and the United States Coast Guard Academy for site visits dates are pending confirmation for these visits. Invitations to present have been extended to the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities and OPM Secretary Benjamin Barnes. Jack Frost discussed contacting Beau Doherty from Special Olympics to speak on the topic of volunteerism and how to encourage persons to participate. Sheila Mulvey suggested that a presentation from a behaviorist would be useful to learn other ways then with medication to include individuals into their communities.

New Business:

Patti Silva requested a letter of support from the Council regarding the Connecticut Deaf Child Bill of Rights. This bill would ensure the choice of language and communication mode of deaf/hard of hearing children is respected and to ensure that these children have fully accessible educational opportunities through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) focused on the child's language and communication needs.

Ms. Silva made a motion, seconded by Mr. Vingo that the Council draft a letter of support to the Education Committee for the Connecticut Deaf Child Bill of Rights by February 24, 2012. The Council voted unanimously to write the letter of support.

Ms. Carroll addressed the Council on how this bill would be an asset in supporting children who have any type of communication issue. This would require school districts to evaluate each child's language and communication needs something that is not being done currently.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38pm on a motion made by Thomas Kalal, seconded by Shelia Mulvey.